

AMENDMENT TO THE DRAWINGS

A replacement sheet is filed herewith for Figure 6a.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present Amendment is responsive to the non-final Office Action mailed October 18, 2006, in the above-identified application.

Claims 2-4 have been withdrawn from consideration. New claim 6 is added. Therefore, claims 1, 5 and 6 are the claims presented for examination at this time.

Claims 1 and 5 are amended to clarify features recited thereby.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging review and consideration of the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 22, 2004.

Objection to the Drawings

The Drawings are objected to on the ground that reference numeral 90' in Figure 6a is not mentioned in the description. Figure 6a is amended.

Objection to the Abstract

The Abstract of the Disclosure is objected to on the ground that it exceeds 150 words in length. A new Abstract is filed herewith.

Objection to the Specification

The Specification is objected to on the ground that section headings are not included. The Specification is amended.

Rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lachaux, U.S. Patent No. 4,386,627. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

For at least the following reasons, the recitations of claim 1 are neither anticipated by nor obvious from the cited art. Claim 1 requires an additional valve for closing off a channel or passage which extends through the first closure member of the main valve from the interior of the tank to the connection opening when the main valve is in a closed position and open when the difference between the pressure in the interior of the tank and the pressure in the connection opening is higher than the original pressure in the expansion tank.

Lachaux discloses an accumulator high flow valve of a pressure vessel (Lachaux, Abstract), the vessel having a provision for preventing the main vent 25 from being sucked to a closed position by a strong current (Lachaux, Figures 2 and 3). Lachaux discloses a pressure vessel with a movable separator 14 filled with gas and a liquid compartment 16 for holding liquid (Lachaux, column 4, lines 10-29; Figure 1), and provides a channel 35, 34, 43, 40, 36 to the main valve 25. Ball 42 of the auxiliary channel moves up and is pressed against a valve seat 44 when there is a sudden great difference in pressure. When there is a high pressure difference between the interior of the vessel 16 and the passage 21, the main valve would be brought to a sudden close, but the ball 42 is pressed against the valve seat 44 by fluid 36 which can leave the chamber 33. Accordingly, in Lachaux's apparatus fluid is prevented from leaving the chamber 33 too quickly to prevent slamming of the main valve and damage to the apparatus. Thus, at a high pressure difference, the ball 42 is up at the valve seat 44 to close the auxiliary channel.

The upper end 41 of hollow pin 39 is open during a large pressure difference between the expansion vessel and the discharge opening, and Lachaux describes the upper end 41 of hollow pin 39 as a non-sealing seat for ball 42 (Lachaux, column 5, line 12). When the main valve of Lachaux is closed, the auxiliary valve cannot create an opening between the expansion vessel and the discharge opening because the opening 35 is not in the expansion vessel but on the side of the main valve which is in fluid connection with the discharge opening (see for example, Figure 3 of Lachaux).

Therefore, Lachaux does not disclose or suggest an additional valve closed during normal operation of the expansion tank when connected to a pipe system filled with liquid and open when the difference between the pressure in the interior of the tank and the pressure in the connection opening is higher than the original pressure in the expansion tank, as required by claim 1. That is, Lachaux does not disclose or suggest an additional valve for closing off a channel or passage which extends through the first closure member of the main valve from the interior of the tank to the connection opening when the main valve is in a closed position, such that the additional valve provides an opening when the difference in pressure is sufficiently great at a time when the main valve is in a closed position. Therefore, Lachaux does not disclose or suggest the recitations of claim 1.

New Claim

New claim 6 is added so as more fully to claim patentable features of applicant's invention. New claim 6 is fully supported by applicant's Disclosure, see for example claim 5 as originally filed.

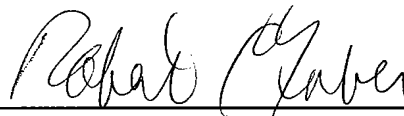
Claim 6 depends from claim 1 and is therefore patentably distinguishable over the cited art for at least the same reasons.

In view of the foregoing discussion withdrawal of the objections and the rejection and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,



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